

Supreme Council urges Bahrain to heal rifts in the spirit of Ramadan

MANAMA – August 3, 2011 – Yesterday, Bahrain's Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs congratulated His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa on the advent of Ramadan.

Bahrainis were encouraged yesterday to use Ramadan as a time to heal sectarian rifts and to promote peace and reconciliation caused by recent unrest.

"Take advantage of the spiritual atmosphere prevailing in Ramadan to heal rifts caused by recent regretful incidents," urged HE Shaikh Abdullah bin Khalid Al Khalifa.

He also praised His Majesty King Hamad's commitment to the National Dialogue and stressed that scholars, imams and preachers should fulfill their roles by calling for unity to protect Bahraini society.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain

Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

20110803 - 2 PM 2:43

Bahrain announces salary hikes for public sector employees

MANAMA – August 3, 2011 - Inspired by views expressed during the National Dialogue, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa announced a 36.5 percent salary increase for government employees and a 37.5 percent salary increase for pensioners, reports the Khaleej Times.

With the increase, the minimum salary for government workers would be BD402 and BD275 for pensioners; with a cost of living allowance between BD50 and BD60. All retired employees will receive a monthly allowance of BD75.

The government has allocated BD200 million for these increases, which will be the largest in the history of Bahrain. Increases will benefit all civilian and military officials when they take effect this month.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain

Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

2011 AUG 3 10:13 AM

His Majesty King Hamad of Bahrain Orders Ramadan Allowances for Needy Families

MANAMA -- July 28, 2011 -- In commemoration of the Holy Month of Ramadan, His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa ordered a royal Ramadan allowance for all needy families registered with the Royal Charity Organization (RCO) and the Social Development Ministry.

His Majesty designated the RCO to manage the distribution of payments of the Royal donation in close coordination with the Social Development Ministry in the ongoing effort under his patronage to assist all needy families in Bahrain during the Holy Month.

RCO Board of Trustees Chairman Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa extended his thanks and gratitude to His Majesty the King, who serves as the RCO's Honorary President, for the royal donation which underlines the keenness of his concern for the welfare of all Bahraini citizens.

His Majesty the King also directed the RCO to provide care for the families and children of Bahrainis who died in the line of duty to commemorate their enormous sacrifice for the Kingdom.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain

Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

2011 07 28 PM 2:43

Trade fairs in the Kingdom of Bahrain generate BD1 million

MANAMA – July 28, 2011 - Five trade fairs in the Kingdom of Bahrain have brought in an estimated BD1 million worth of business during the month of July.

“These were the result of the vision and ideas of planners who have done the right thing, keeping in mind the interests of small traders,” said committee chairman Jawad Al Hawaj.

100,000 visitors were recorded by the start of the final event Monday, July 25th, at Riffa Club. Since its start on July 7th this series of trade fairs has helped revitalize Bahrain’s economy, reported Gulf News Daily.

“We are looking at holding such fairs regularly, possibly themed events more frequently so that we can accommodate more and more traders,” said Tamkeen vice-chairman Khalid Amin.

The success of these trade fairs follows recent positive economic news in the two months since His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa lifted the State of National Safety in June.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain

Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

2011.07.28 PM 2:43

Bahrain welcomes new Islamic development bank

MANAMA – July 28, 2011 – Following recent positive economic development in the Kingdom, officials announced plans to establish a new multibillion dollar investment bank in Bahrain.

The new bank, Al-Emar Bank (the Construction Bank) will be announced formally during an Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) meeting in December 2011, reports CPI Financial.

The bank will provide financing for projects in 57 member countries of the OIC to rehabilitate countries that have been victims of recent unrest, and finance private sector projects in compliance with Islamic Shari'ah.

The bank's initial capital will be \$10 billion and expand to \$100 billion; the expected launch date is next January.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

2011/07/28 PM 2:43

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bahrain's Summer Festival Unites Bahrainis, Draws Unprecedented Attendance

MANAMA—July 27, 2011—Bahrain's annual Summer Festival, under this year's "A Victory of Joy" theme, has returned successfully for the third year—a sign of the country's recovery and return to stability.

The "A Victory of Joy" festival opened earlier this month to enthusiastic crowds and has featured 11 artistic and cultural events such as global music, dance and theater groups, Al-Shorfa reports. Attendance has remained steady throughout the month-long festival and performances have been so successful that tickets have been difficult to obtain.

In fact, some visitors have requested additional festivals due to the large attendance.

"They should consider holding the festival's performances in the five provinces of the kingdom, including opening a Nakheel tent in all the provinces to ensure that events are offered for all Bahraini children so they benefit from the entertainment and educational performances," Adel Muhsin, a member of Small House of Bahraini Folk Art, said.

The festival has featured performances by Lebanese singer Samar Kammouj performing works by composer Riad Sunbati, the Liza Alphonso Cuban Dance Company, the Mohammed bin Faris Ensemble of Bahrain, the Fan Al Sut group of Kuwait, Chen Lo and the Lo Frequency group from the United States, the Dhol Foundation of India, the Little Virtuosos of Georgia, and Fan Yang's Gazillion Bubble Show featuring Jano Yang from the United States.

Ayman Ahmed, an Arab expatriate in Bahrain, sees the festival's success as proof of Bahrain's commitment to reform and unity.

"The title of the festival is the biggest proof of overcoming the crisis," he said. "It is 'A Victory of Joy.'"

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

201107-2 PM 2:43

Bahrain Ministry of Health Responds to Medecins Sans Frontieres Statement

MANAMA - August 3, 2011- The Ministry of Health is disappointed by the serious allegations made yesterday in a press release issued by Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) with respect to the arrest of Mr Saeed Mahdi. The Ministry would like to clarify the serious falsehoods in the MSF press release.

1. The events to which the MSF press release speaks occurred because it was operating an unlicensed medical center in a residential apartment building. As MSF was aware, a license was required to provide health services in Bahrain in the current normal circumstances. The existence of this center was not known to the relevant Bahraini authorities.
2. On 27 July 2011, it was unable to provide proper assistance to a patient and it then sought the assistance of the emergency services.
3. The call to the Emergency Services was made by Mr Saeed Mahdi, the coordinator for the MSF center. In order to hide the fact that the patient had initially been treated at the unlicensed center, Mr Mahdi asked for the intervention of the medical services on the basis that he had witnessed a heavily injured person on the side of the road. He reported the incident as a bystander.
4. The patient was then taken to hospital by paramedics. As the injuries suffered were serious, the police intervened to ask how the injuries occurred.
5. Upon further questioning by the police and public prosecutor, Mr Mahdi initially maintained that he had come across the patient lying on the road. When confronted by the evidence of the paramedics that they had picked up the patient from a medical type facility inside a building, Mr Mahdi admitted, under oath, that he is in fact the coordinator for the MSF medical center. He further admitted that this center was unlicensed.
6. A warrant was then issued to search the medical center. It is incorrect that any search took place without such a warrant.
7. Mr Mahdi was charged with four criminal offences, including providing health services without a license and providing false information to the police and the public prosecutor.
8. The accused has never been denied access to a lawyer. The accused's legal representation is Ms Reem Khalaf.
9. Neither has the accused's family ever been denied access to Mr Mahdi. The accused's family has visited him as recently as 3 August 2011.

While the government of Bahrain routinely welcomes international humanitarian

organizations, Bahrain cannot allow any such organization or individuals involved with such an organization to breach Bahraini law. In an area of such fundamental importance as public health services, the Government of Bahrain has a duty to be vigilant in licensing those authorized to provide health services and likewise a duty to investigate those who do so without a license.

The criminal process is underway and Mr Mahdi will be accorded the full rights under Bahraini law.

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Source: Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain

Media Contact:

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This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

2011/10/31 - 2 PM 2:43

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain Hosts Interfaith Dialogue Program during Weekly Iftar

WASHINGTON—August 12, 2011—Bahrain's Ambassador to the United States, Houda Nonoo, hosted an interfaith discussion yesterday during an Iftar held at Bahrain's embassy in Washington, D.C.

"Bahrain is a multicultural, multiethnic, multi-religious society," Ambassador Nonoo said. "During the Holy Month of Ramadan, we at the Bahraini Embassy seek to promote inclusive religious dialogue that celebrates our common beliefs and commitment to one another."

Participants in the dialogue included Rev. Clark Lobenstine — Executive Director of the Interfaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington; Imam Yahya Hendi — Founder and President, Clergy Beyond Borders; and Rabbi Gerald Serotta — Executive Director, Clergy Beyond Borders.

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Source: Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Will Dempster
(202) 407-3511

2011-08-12 PM 5:43

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Bahrain Donates \$3 Million of Humanitarian Aid to Somalia,
Continues Efforts with Day-Long Donation Campaign**

MANAMA—August 11, 2011—Bahrain yesterday approved a \$3 million donation in emergency aid for famine-stricken Somalia and will continue donation efforts with a day-long telethon airing tomorrow.

"The idea is to generate as much as we can for the people of Somalia, who are facing one of the worst humanitarian crises," said a Bahrain Radio and Television Corporation spokesman.

Tomorrow's campaign, led by the Information Affairs Authority, will broadcast documentaries on the plight of the Somali people and will feature popular culture, art, entertainment and sports personalities to encourage participation and giving.

"People from all walks of life in the kingdom will be invited to take part in a marathon discussion, during which callers will be invited to pledge donations in cash or kind," he said.

Donations from Bahraini citizens will be in addition to the \$3 million already donated by the government.

"We are confident the people of Bahrain will donate generously during Ramadan, the month of giving. While we are mostly looking at cash donations, those in kind will also be accepted," the spokesman said.

Tomorrow's telethon will air on Bahrain TV from 2pm to 6pm and 9pm to midnight.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

20110811-2 PM 2:43

Bahrain's Supreme Council for Women praises creation of Equal Opportunities Unit

MANAMA – August 9, 2011 - The Foreign Affairs Minister of Bahrain announced the creation of an Equal Opportunities Unit on Monday. This Unit would expand the rights of Bahraini women in government, Bahrain News Agency reported.

The Secretary General of the Supreme Council for Women (SCW), Hala Al Ansari praised the Ministers' decision, stating that the creation of the unit was in accordance with the National Strategy for the Advancement of Bahraini Women.

The formation of the Equal Opportunities Unit was a result of the efforts made by SCW to integrate women's needs in the government with the assistance of Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, the Supreme Council's chairperson.

###

Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. For more information, please contact the US Department of Justice

2011-08-09 17:41

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bahrain's Business Sector Rebounds Strongly

MANAMA—August 8, 2011—Bahrain's business sector continues its steady rebound following this year's earlier unrest, Gulf Daily News reports. Speaking during Sunday's cabinet meeting, Industry and Commerce Minister Dr. Hassan Fakhro reported a recent boost in local and foreign investor confidence and highlighted the strong recovery of revenues in the hotel and commercial sectors.

During the weekly meeting, the cabinet noted that a majority of ministries and agencies had successfully implemented the 2009 National Audit Court suggestions to combat waste in government ministries. The cabinet further urged the prevention of court-cited violations and the establishment of committees to investigate financial irregularities within each ministry.

In addition, the energy minister briefed the cabinet on steps needed to meet the summer's rising electricity demands.

Concluding the meeting, the cabinet established a Foreign Ministry committee for the implementation of United Nations Security Council decisions.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

201108-2 P.12:43

Human Rights and Social Development Minister praise Bahrain's progress

MANAMA — August 5, 2011 — In a recent interview with Al Watan newspaper, Human Rights and Social Development Minister Dr. Fatima Al Balooshi praised the government of Bahrain's commitment to change and reform in light of recent events, the Bahrain News Agency reports.

"The government's initiatives to lift the State of National Safety, establish the independent Royal Fact-Finding Commission, call for a National Dialogue engaging all parties, release of detainees and reinstatement of dismissed workers reflects the kingdom's long human rights record and the government's commitment to them," Dr. Al Balooshi said.

She also spoke about Bahrain's long standing interest in human rights and noted that Bahrain was one of the first Arab countries to align themselves with international human rights conventions, the Bahrain News Agency report continues.

Dr. Al Balooshi also asserted that the recent uprisings are not a reflection of the Bahraini people as a whole.

"The events that gripped the kingdom recently are in disharmony with the beliefs of the loyal Bahraini people, indicating that the country is willing to address the issue appropriately," she continued.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain

Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

2011-08-05 2 PM 2:43

Bahrain welcomes NGOs to monitor upcoming elections

MANAMA – August 5, 2011 – Non-governmental organizations will be permitted to monitor Bahrain's upcoming parliamentary special election in September, the Kingdom's justice minister said.

"We are keen on the participation of the civil societies in monitoring the elections and helping ensure their success," Shaikh Khalid Bin Ali Al Khalifa told Gulf Daily News.

Following the resignation of 18 members of Parliament from the Al Wefaq Political Society, His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa called for a special election to fill their seats. This would "allow the men and women of Bahrain to elect their representatives," His Majesty the King said.

The by-election will be held on September 24th and the ministry has stressed its commitment to the success of the election by constructing five new polling place to permit people to vote outside their constituencies, the report continued.

"Voters can avoid long queues or avoid going to their designated polling stations by simply casting their ballots in any of the general polling areas," the authorities said.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain

Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

201108-2 F.I.2:13

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bahraini Telethon Raises \$2.7 million for Somalia

MANAMA—August 13, 2011—Yesterday, Bahrain's "BH4Somalia" campaign, a day-long telethon to benefit famine-stricken Somalia, raised more than 1 million Bahraini Dinars or \$2.7 million in donations.

An initiative of the Information Affair Authority, "BH4Somalia" broadcast yesterday on Bahrain TV from 2 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and 9 p.m. to midnight, during which participants were able to call in or donate via SMS. Those wishing to donate in person visited the IAA headquarters in Isa town or donation centers in the City Center and Seef Malls.

More than 12,000 Bahrainis and expatriates participated.

The telethon follows an earlier \$3 million donation in humanitarian aid by the Bahraini government.

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Source: Bahrain News Agency
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

201108-2 PM 2:43

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bahrain's National Dialogue Implementation Committee Advances Momentum for Reforms

MANAMA—August 16, 2011—Yesterday, Bahrain's National Dialogue implementation committee met for an update on initiatives currently underway and to discuss best practices for ensuring the progression of future reforms.

The Bahraini government has begun aggressively implementing a number of important reforms agreed to during the National Dialogue. These include raising minimum wages and pension, speeding up the Labor Law approval and enacting new laws to regulate and manage state property. Next, the government will establish a process to ensure food subsidies reach those in need. Included in the plan will be a four-year study to assess the results and guarantee the program's effectiveness.

Future initiatives resulting from the National Dialogue involve consolidating economic openness in the domestic market, activating the role of the office for the protection of intellectual property rights and patents, promoting Bahrain as an economic hub, opening economic offices in major world capital, developing of mechanisms to monitor spending at ministries and government agencies, reducing allowances, diversifying income sources and increasing non-oil revenues.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

20110816-2 PM 2:43

Bahrain's King Issues Pardons, Reaffirms Commitment to Unity and Forgiveness

MANAMA--August 29, 2011--In an address to the nation last night, His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain announced pardons for many political protesters and urged the reinstatement of employees in an effort to uphold the country's spirit of unity.

"We would like to emphasize that we do not anticipate putting everyone on trial," His Majesty King Hamad said. "There are those who were charged with abusing us and senior officials in Bahrain, and we today announce that we forgive them as we hope that they understand that abusing us and others in fact offends everyone and achieves nothing."

His Majesty the King stressed that the government's aim is for "tolerance and for shunning violence, and not for excessive punishment that affects our unity, cohesion and national co-existence," in a speech broadcast Sunday on Bahrain TV.

His Majesty the King's address, marking the last ten days of Ramadan, followed the reinstatement of more than 400 Bahraini students who were suspended earlier this year. Reflecting on Ramadan, His Majesty King Hamad noted that the religious observance has "made us all recall our traditional interactions, compassion and fraternity," while he hopes Bahrain "will witness a new stage of outstanding productivity, cohesion and stability as our reforms move forward."

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Media Contact: Matt Lauer, (703) 463-1841

This release has been issued by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. For more information please contact the US Department of Justice.

20110829-2 PM 2:43

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bahrain Authorizes \$3.97 Billion in Industrial Projects

MANAMA—August 28, 2011—More than BD1.5 billion, or \$3.97 billion, in industrial projects have been approved by Bahrain's government since 2009, Industry and Commerce Minister Dr. Hassan Fakhro said Friday.

Approximately 300 of 546 projects, valued at BD942 million, have been granted licenses and are currently underway. In 2009, 127 of these projects were given final approval, while 140 were given final status in 2010.

In the first quarter of this year alone, Bahrain approved 51 industrial projects and handed out 33 industrial licenses worth BD110 million.

Earlier this week, Dr. Fakhro thanked the private sector for its role in helping Bahrain's economy rebound and for its contribution to the industry's growth.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

2011-08-28 PM 2:44

Establishment of new Gulf Air route to Rome hailed by Italian Ambassador to Bahrain

MANAMA – August 28, 2011 – In an interview with Gulf Daily News, Italy's Ambassador to Bahrain Enrico Padula lauded the establishment of direct flight service on Gulf Air between Bahrain and Rome.

"The historic and commercial ties between Italy and Bahrain will be further enhanced," he said.

Beginning on November 30, Gulf Air will operate four flights per week to Italy's capital. Pledging Italy's full-fledged support to ensuring the success of the new route, Ambassador Padula said, "We are certain that it will be as successful as the Milan route Gulf Air launched earlier this year, and that it will encourage passengers in both countries to explore everything Bahrain and Rome have to offer."

This announcement follows an earlier decision to establish new routes to Entebbe, Uganda's commercial center, and Juba, the capital of the newly established state of South Sudan.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. For more information, please contact the US Department of Justice

2011 OCT -2 PM 2:44

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**GCC Economic Stability Result of Member States' Unity,
Bahraini Government Says**

MANAMA—August 18, 2011—The Bahraini government yesterday welcomed a delegation of Kuwaiti businessmen and reaffirmed the GCC's economic strength and stability.

The GCC's strength lies in its unity, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa said, speaking to the delegation. "It also lies in reliance on GCC people, keenness to improve their capabilities, efforts to consolidate international relations and meet the needs of the young," he said.

His Royal Highness, Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa also emphasized that strong GCC economic cooperation has led to continuous investment growth among the countries. He further welcomed all GCC investments in Bahrain and pledged to help facilitate their success.

The Prime Minister and Crown Prince also praised the long-standing relationship between Bahrain and Kuwait.

"The steady growth of bilateral cooperation is the outcome of the advanced level of the eternal Bahraini-Kuwaiti relations, anchored by the forefathers and strengthened by the successive generations," His Royal Highness the Prime Minister said.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

20110817-2 PM 2:44

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bahraini King Pledges Support for Libya's National Transitional Council

MANAMA—September 4, 2011—His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa met on Friday with the head of Libya's National Transitional Council Mustafa Abduljalil and expressed support for a free and stable Libya.

During the meeting in Paris, His Majesty King Hamad pledged to strengthen relations between the countries and hoped the recently held "Friends of Libya" conference would garner the international support needed to reconstruct Libya.

In turn, Mr. Abduljalil thanked Bahrain and its people for their support during the country's ongoing effort to achieve the Libyan people's interests.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

2011 09 07 -2 PM 2:44

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FIA Moves 2012 Bahrain Grand Prix to Earlier in Year

MANAMA—September 1, 2011—The FIA World Motor Sports Council voted yesterday to approve shifting Bahrain's 2012 Grand Prix from its originally scheduled date in October to earlier in the year. Under the current schedule, the race will be held April 22, a sign of confidence in the country's improving stability and its ability to host the top tier race.

CEO of the Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) Sheikh Salman bin Isa Al Khalifa welcomed the decision and confirmed that the country and the BIC will be prepared for the date shift. Sheikh Salman also thanked the government and the Bahraini people for their efforts in getting the country's Grand Prix race back on the schedule.

The updated Grand Prix calendar swapped Bahrain's race with the Indian Grand Prix, which will now be held October 28.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

201109-2 PM 2:44

Bahrain's Economy Earns Strong Second Quarter Results

MANAMA--August 30, 2011--Bahrain's economy posted strong second quarter results, indicating Bahrain's quick recovery and strong economic outlook. During the second quarter, the country's economy grew 19.8 percent at current prices compared to the same quarter last year, the Central Informatics Organization (CIO) said.

"Bold decisions taken by Gulf governments during the recent incidents, particularly Saudi Arabia and the UAE, have helped boost business sentiment in the country and improved the investment climate for the private sector," CIO President Dr. Mohammed Al Amer said.

The boosted economic numbers have been linked with increased international oil prices, according to the CIO. At constant prices, the country's economy registered 0.8 percent growth compared to last year.

Growth reached the banking sector, which saw a 3.7 percent increase at constant prices, while the services sector also posted stable growth in the areas of goods producing industries, transportation and communications, government services, social and personal services, electricity and water and agriculture and fishing.

Dr. Al Amer is confident the numbers reflect the country's strong economic future.

"This positive impact will encourage foreign and institutional investors to return to Bahrain."

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain

Media Contact: Matt Lauer, +1-703-463-1841

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

2011 NOV -2 PM 2:44

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Bahrain Provides Additional Relief Aid to Somalia,
Funds Specialist Hospital**

MANAMA-----September 28, 2011-----Bahrain continued its relief effort to famine-stricken Somalia today by agreeing to provide its first relief aid consignment to Somalia with the intent to help cure 1,000 ccitizens with cataracts.

The contract, an initiative of Bahrain's Royal Charity Organization under the direction of Board Chairman Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, was signed following a delegation visit to Somalia's Mogadishu Ophthalmology Specialist Hospital.

Under the agreement, Bahrain will fund the \$1.5 million development of a state-of-the-art specialist hospital in Somalia, as well as a nursing school to train medical personnel.

In cooperation with Islamic Relief, Bahrain will also invest \$1.2 million to develop ten wells within the country.

Somalia, which suffered a drought earlier this year, is struggling to recover from the food shortage and provide basic care to its citizens. His Majesty King Hamad of Bahrain has prioritized aid to Somalia in hopes of meeting the famine-stricken country's growing medical needs.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

201109-2 PM 2:44

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Bahrain's Innovative Waterfront Property Nominated for
International Urban Planning Award**

MANAMA-----**September 26, 2011**-----Bahrain will represent the GCC at tomorrow's Cityscape Global Awards in the "Master Planning" category, which recognizes industry best practices and new standards for urban design.

The Cityscape Global Awards in Dubai honor top real estate and property developments in the region, focusing on construction and architecture. Bahrain's \$25 million waterfront property, Bahrain Bay, is the only GCC development to be nominated in the "Master Planning" category and will compete against other properties in China and India.

"This nomination is a testament to our philosophy of creating a contemporary urban environment inspired by Bahrain's rich heritage," Bahrain Bay CEO Bob Vincent said.

The property has already received the Arabian Commercial Property award for "Best Mixed Use Development, Arabia" and the Business Initiative Direction's "International Arch of Europe" award. The continued accolades set Bahrain Bay on a path to become the region's leading waterfront development, Bahrain Bay Deputy CEO Abdulla Al Doseri said.

"Skidmore, Owings & Merrill expertly translated our unique vision into reality, and we are now progressing well towards our goal of transforming the north shore of the capital of Bahrain into a modern, intelligent, sustainable community," he said.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

2011.09-2 PM 2:44

King of Bahrain Establishes Special Fund for Victims

The Ministry of Justice of the Kingdom of Bahrain Released the Following Statement:

His Majesty the King has created a new fund to provide effective remedies to individuals and their families who may have suffered harm during the disruptions that occurred in Bahrain earlier this year.

The fund, established on Tuesday with the issuance of Royal Decree-Law 30, is the first of its kind in the region. It is constructed to be consistent with the best and most successful practices existing in international law. The new fund supplements current remedies available to victims under existing law.

The Kingdom of Bahrain takes very seriously all allegations that persons have been mistreated, whether by state officials or others. Victims who may seek relief from the newly established fund include the direct victim, the immediate family or dependents of the direct victim, and persons who have suffered harm in intervening to assist victims in distress or to prevent victimization.

Through this Royal Decree, His Majesty the King establishes a Special Fund for Victims. The remedies provided will be consistent with the Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Human Rights, adopted and proclaimed by the General Assembly Resolution 60/147 of 16 December 2005.

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Source: Ministry of Justice of the Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Judge Khalid Ajaji, +973 17513322

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain

2011-10-31 17:44

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bahrain creates compensation fund

MANAMA – September 20, 2011 - Yesterday His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa laid out plans for a national fund to ensure “substantial” compensation for victims of the recent unrest, Gulf Daily News reported.

The National Compensation and Redress Fund was approved by the Ministers and will be under the direction of the Human Rights and Social Development Ministry.

The creation of this fund is in alignment with royal directives to promote national laws and legislation and will help to protect citizens rights laid out during the national dialogue.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Will Dempster, 202-407-3511

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

20109-2 PM 2:44

Deputy Prime Minister of Bahrain Moves Forward on National Dialogue Implementations

MANAMA, Bahrain, September 18, 2011 — On what was the International Day of Democracy on September 15, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain demonstrated democracy is alive in Bahrain as he headed a meeting of the committee in charge of implementing the National Dialogue reforms.

At the meeting, Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa reiterated the importance of continued progress regarding the implementation of the reforms.

The meeting included an update on the status of the many reforms and where they are in the implementation process.

In regards to the political reforms, 10 out of the 25 reforms have gone through the necessary governmental procedures and are ready to be implemented. The committee discussed the 82 economic reforms that are currently in the implementation process, and in respect to the social reforms, 24 of them have been finalized, while 56 of them are in the process of being implemented.

It was also noted that many of the reforms, which require constitutional amendments, are ready to go before the appropriate governmental committee next week.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain:
Contact: Will Dempster, 202-407-3511

This has been distributed Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

201109-2 PM 2:44

Deputy Prime Minister of Bahrain Moves Forward on National Dialogue Implementations

MANAMA, Bahrain, September 18, 2011 — On what was the International Day of Democracy on September 15, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain demonstrated democracy is alive in Bahrain as he headed a meeting of the committee in charge of implementing the National Dialogue reforms.

At the meeting, Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa reiterated the importance of continued progress regarding the implementation of the reforms.

The meeting included an update on the status of the many reforms and where they are in the implementation process.

In regards to the political reforms, 10 out of the 25 reforms have gone through the necessary governmental procedures and are ready to be implemented. The committee discussed the 82 economic reforms that are currently in the implementation process, and in respect to the social reforms, 24 of them have been finalized, while 56 of them are in the process of being implemented.

It was also noted that many of the reforms, which require constitutional amendments, are ready to go before the appropriate governmental committee next week.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain:
Contact: Will Dempster, 202-407-3511

This has been distributed Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

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British Ambassador to Bahrain Praises Efforts of Nation's National Dialogue

MANAMA, Bahrain, September 15, 2011 — Newly appointed British Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain, Iain Lindsay, recently applauded the efforts of the nation's National Dialogue and reiterated Britain's commitment to supporting Bahrain.

Speaking to *Gulf Daily News*, Lindsay acknowledged the difficulties the country has faced recently and praised the government for turning to dialogue and peaceful discussion as a solution.

"There has to be a process of dialogue and that can't happen on the street," Lindsay told *Gulf Daily News*.

Lindsay also expressed enthusiasm at the reforms that resulted from the National Dialogue, saying there were clear recommendations aimed at continued political, economic and social reforms. Lindsay in particular praised the National Dialogue's recommendation for an anti-sectarian law.

As far as the implementation process for the National Dialogue reforms, Lindsay believes effective implementation of the reforms will play an important role in the nation's future.

"The effective implementation [of the National Dialogue recommendations] is absolutely critical and an inclusive process of implementation will be absolutely critical in bringing back stability, prosperity and reconciliation," Lindsay told *Gulf Daily News*.

Lindsay also offered his and Britain's help, if desired, to aid in implementation of the National Dialogue reforms.

He also noted the how important it is all for all members of society, at all levels, to engage in dialogue as a way to enact change.

"I think it's the responsibility of all leaders in society, whether in government, opposition or community leaders, to calm the situation, to encourage dialogue and encourage reconciliation," Lindsay was quoted as saying in *Gulf Daily News*.

Lindsay also praised the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI), being led by Mahmoud Cherif Bassiouni, as another positive, peaceful way for the nation to move on and noted he was looking forward to seeing the outcome and any resulting reforms.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Media Contact: Will Dempster, 202-407-3511

201109-2 PM 2:44

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bahrain's Interior Ministry Implements National Dialogue Reforms

MANAMA—September 14, 2011—During yesterday's National Dialogue implementation committee session, Bahrain's Interior Minister Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa briefed committee members on the progress of dialogue recommendations and confirmed implementations have already taken place.

Spurred by the National Dialogue, the ministry established a joint training initiative between armed forces and police for learning and carrying out proper protocol during public demonstrations. The ministry is also working to implement more National Dialogue outcomes such as reevaluating demonstration locations and times, ensuring march laws comply with children's rights and religious processions, as well as how to better protect naturalized citizens.

In addition, Minister Shaikh Rashid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa discussed the laws, amendments and executive procedures necessary to implement 16 more reforms, stressing the continuation of National Dialogue efforts.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

201109-2 PM 2:44

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Woman Elected to Lower House of Bahrain's Parliament

MANAMA—September 12, 2011—His Majesty, King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain,, congratulated Sawsan Al Taqawi today on the occasion of her election to the Lower House of Parliament, noting the victory represents contributions women have made throughout Bahrain's society.

"This success is the result of the progress achieved by Bahraini women in all areas and their participation in the nation's overall development and their determination to contribute to building the future of the country," His Majesty King Hamad said.

Sawsan was declared an early winner of the special elections, set to take place September 24, after her opponents dropped out of the race. She will represent Bahrain's North Governorate 2nd Constituency in the Lower Chamber.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

2011 NOV -2 PM 2:44

Bahrain Established National Audit Court to Combat Corruption

MANAMA -- September 6, 2011 -- In the Government of Bahrain's ongoing efforts to implement the recommendations of the comprehensive and historic National Dialogue, His Excellency, Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa announced the formation of a National Audit Court to combat corruption and increase transparency within the government.

The creation of the auditing system will allow the Court to uphold the government's commitment to safeguarding public money, promoting accountability and advancing the government's goals for transparency.

His Excellency Finance Minister Sheikh Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Khalifa encouraged and praised the National Dialogue implementation process and noted that 60 percent of all recommendations related to the Finance Ministry have already been implemented, reported Gulf Daily News.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Will Dempster, 202-407-3511

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. For more information, please contact the U.S. Department of Justice.

2011 NOV - 2 PM 2:44

Bahrain's National Dialogue Draw Support from Turkish President

MANAMA—September 7, 2011—In a meeting with His Majesty, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Turkish President Abdullah Gül voiced his country's support for Bahrain's National Dialogue and His Majesty's decision to establish the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry.

Visiting Turkey at the invitation of President Gül, His Majesty King Hamad discussed the implementation of National Dialogue reforms and their place within the country's overall reform program begun ten years ago. His Majesty went on to discuss the latest status of Bahrain's nongovernmental fact-finding commission into alleged abuses earlier in the year.

President Gül recognized that Bahrain's efforts would help lead to peace and stability in the Middle East and expressed a desire for further cooperation between the countries.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Will Dempster, 202-407-3511

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain. For more information, please contact the U.S. Department of Justice

2011 NOV -2 P.1 2:44

Bahrain Ministry of Health Releases Statement on Sentencing of Doctors, Nurses and Medics

MANAMA (September 30, 2011) -- Bahrain's Ministry of Health Released the following statement in response to the sentencing of former employees of the Salmaniya Medical Complex:

Doctors and other medical professionals had their sentences reviewed on Thursday. After consideration by authorities, the charges and sentences were handed down following the forcible occupation of Salmaniya Medical Complex, unlawfully controlling the entrances and exits of all divisions and departments, using force and threats, and other actions.

The 20 individuals were arrested for committing acts considered to be administrative offenses under Bahraini hospital regulations or a criminal offense under the Penal Code. Those charges include:

1. Taking control of the hospital's main points of entry and exit and guarded access with violent activist elements
2. Refusing treatment for citizens and residents based on sectarian reasons based on marking of religion and political affiliation on hospital records
3. Converting the hospital into a place of demonstrations, sit-ins, political seminars, and a platform for media interviews
4. Encouraging press to advertise and support protestors by allowing film inside the hospital including the emergency department and operating rooms
5. Providing inaccurate and false statements including wrong and exaggerated statistics about the numbers of those injured
6. Conducting unnecessary surgeries while allowing media to film and photograph in attempt to show gruesome images and achieve emotional impact on domestic and international public opinion
7. Seizing drugs and medical equipment and transfer to other locations, violating the law and hospital regulations
8. Intimidation of fellow doctors, nurses, and administrators who did not agree with the doctors in question
9. Attacking and injuring security forces and foreign workers; Kidnapped and detained Asian laborers and held them within the hospital
10. Using the hospital to store weapons. Weapons found include two AK47s (Kalashnikov) and ammunition; bladed weapons (swords and knives); and packages of flammable cocktails Molotov
11. Transporting demonstrators with their weapons using hospital ambulances to areas within Bahrain where citizens were attacked

The last session of the trial based on the charges outlined above for 20 physicians was concluded on September 7, 2011. At the request of the defense, defendants were released under bail. Their appeal was heard on September 29, 2011.

As outlined, the case regarded the occupation of Salmaniya Medical Complex by force and controlling the entrances and exits of all divisions and departments using force and threats; the

possession of a weapons (Kalashnikov) and knives without a license; calling for regime change by force; seizing of medical equipment; holding members of the police hostage; use of media to broadcast and incite for hatred of the regime; refusal to treat the injured; destruction of public properties and public order; committing crimes for a terrorist purpose.

The Court sentenced the following hospital staff to 15 years in prison: Ali Issa Mansour Akri; Ali Hassan Alsdda; Nader Mohammed Hasan Diwani; Ahmed Abdel-Aziz Hassan Omran; Mahmoud Abdel-Wahab, Ibrahim Abdullah Ibrahim; Rola Mohammed Jassim al-Saffar; Abdul Khaliq Ali Hussein Ureybi; Ghassan Ahmed Ali Guest; Nada Saced Abdel Nabi, and Muhammad Qasim Muhammad Imran.

Also heard again on September 29 was the case of the premeditated killing of an officer, Ahmed Ahmed Muraysi, while he performed his duties in Sitra. Using his car in a criminal act that breached the public order and endangered the lives of innocent Bahrainis, the defendant repeatedly ran over the officer – who was on the ground. These actions also obstructed the duties of the public authorities.

The Court ruled unanimously regarding the death of Ali Yussef Abdel Wahab and sentence Mehdi Ali Attia to life imprisonment. Their actions can be seen on video by following the link below:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XQoZb2hq8SQ>
<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XQoZb2hq8SQ>>

The Bahraini judicial systems guarantees to ensure the rights of all detained and the freedom to speak without coercion and the accused in question have come forward voluntarily and by choice. The Bahraini government takes all cases seriously and will continue to try all sentences in line with the law and judicial system in place.

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Source: Bahrain News Agency
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Olayan Kimberly-Clark Expands Investment in Bahrain with
New \$50 Million Kleenex Tissue Plant**

MANAMA—October 2, 2011—Kimberly-Clark—maker of Kleenex, Huggies and Cottonelle products—recently opened a new \$50 million Kleenex tissue production plant at the Olayan Kimberly-Clark mill in Askar, Bahrain.

"I believe that congratulations are in order, not only for the completion of the new facility, but also for their foresight in choosing Bahrain as the site for their new investment," Industry and Commerce Minister Dr. Hassan Fakhro said at the opening event.

The facility will produce 31,000 tons of Kleenex tissues and other products for Olayan Kimberly-Clark, which holds 23 percent of the GCC market share. This plant, along with facility upgrades in Saudi Arabia, will triple the company's production capability.

Dr. Fakhro stated his belief that the investment demonstrates the strength and stability of the Bahraini market.

"Bahrain is very much back in business, and both investors and consumers are proving this with their confidence," he said. "Investors are more than ever encouraged by the opportunities that continue to unfold in the region."

###

Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Minister of Industry and Commerce Announces \$13 Billion Commitment to
Bahrain International Investment Park**

MANAMA—October 1, 2011—Over the next few years, Bahrain's International Investment Park will receive more than \$13 billion in additional commitments, Bahrain's Minister of Industry and Commerce Dr. Hassan Fakhro said on Thursday.

Speaking at the opening of the Zayani Polymers plant, the park's new \$37 million development, Dr. Fakhro explained that the new projects will increase job opportunities and employ approximately 8,000 people.

So far, 28 projects have begun operation, with 23 more underway and another 20 in initial stages. Singapore's engineering company MTQ and Illium France are among the newest companies to invest in the park.

###

Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Bahraini Parliamentarians Usher in Spirit of Optimism

MANAMA—October 4, 2011—Following last week's special elections, Bahrain's parliament now represents a larger variety of constituents with even more perspectives and political agendas than ever before, said newly elected MP Jamal Mohammed Abdulla.

Abdulla, who won the Capital Governorate's Constituency Eight seat during the second round of by-elections last Saturday, reflected on election results: "I am very positive about the new parliament, as members are more independent and not politically aligned to a group or society, therefore their views are not dictated by any outside influence."

The election process resulted in fair, transparent results, according to Abdulla, who represents constituents in Tashan and Bilad Al Qadeem.

"It was a very clean competition, with fair campaigns and my electoral team came out clean in the end," he said.

For Abdulla, several initiatives are at the top of his agenda, including improving the efficiency of the legislation process and helping "those at the lower levels of society to improve their quality of living," he said.

###

Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

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2011 NOV -2 P.1 2:45

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Success of Middle East Oil and Gas Show and Conference in Bahrain
Restores Industry Confidence**

MANAMA—October 6, 2011—The Middle East Oil and Gas Show and Conference at the Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Centre attracted a record attendance of more than 7,000 professionals from 30 nations, including Bahraini students interested in learning more about the field.

General Manager for Unicom Graphics Sonjoy Monteiro, who has done business in Bahrain for more than 16 years, appreciated the organizers' efforts to boost business.

"We are very thrilled and grateful to the organizers. It was important to beat the negativity and squash the rumors," he said. "Bahrain needs these kinds of exhibitions. I hope this is just the beginning and it will open up the floodgates."

Although originally scheduled for March but postponed due to unrest, the delayed conference date did not deter participants or attendees.

"They had to delay the expo but I don't think it has hurt the exhibition. Bahrain is going to be OK and this is one indication that it will be," ARAMCO Professional Development Advisor Melanie Steiman said.

Business Development Manager of Gulf Strategic Partners Paul Mitchell agreed: "I think it is very refreshing to see that there is a lot of interest. Prior to coming here I was not sure of what to expect but it is nice to see people coming back to do business. It shows that more people are willing to put the past behind them and try to bring things back to where they were before."

Organizers are looking forward to future exhibitions that will further boost the economy and target various sectors, such as the upcoming Jewellery Arabia, the largest jewelry exhibition in the Middle East.

"I think this was a test for us and it has been a success. I believe the Jewellery Arabia will go ahead as scheduled," Fawzi S. Al Shehabi, director of sales and marketing for Arabian Exhibition Management, said. "Slowly and gradually we will get back to normal. Hotels are full and taxi drivers are happy."

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

2011 NOV -2 FRI 2:45

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bahrain's Muharraq City Council Goes Green with New Paperless Initiative

MANAMA—October 10, 2011—Bahrain's Muharraq City Council is eliminating printed agendas and materials during council meetings in an effort to be more environmentally friendly and set a precedent within the government.

“By doing away with this item of consumables we are able to save on much paper and in the process helping save environment,” Abdulnasser Al Mahmeed, chairman of the Muharraq Municipal Council, said.

The council plans to replace all printing and paper, including books, with the use of individual laptops. To offset the expense of the laptops, the council is removing personal computers from council member offices.

Council meetings are also entering the digital age with videocaped footage of meetings that will ultimately be streamed to the building's lobby for public viewing. Footage will also be archived on the website, providing a more user-friendly experience for citizens.

“Once these are in place, the website and all channels on the social websites will be enabled so citizens can browse the net and know what has been discussed,” Al Mahmeed said.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

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2011 NOV -2 PM 2:45

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bahrain Updates Trade Union Act to Reflect Greater Workers' Rights

MANAMA—October 13, 2011—Yesterday, Bahrain amended its Trade Union Act to allow for the creation of multiple unions and to increase pluralism within the labor sector.

"The changes will enable workers to set up more than one union to defend their interests," Labor Minister Jameel Humaidan said.

Minister Humaidan stressed the measure's importance in the prevention of a monopoly and in providing unions with more autonomy. Because Article 10 of the act prohibits unions based on religion or ethnicity, the unions will steer away from politics and instead focus on improving worker benefits and boosting economic output.

Bahrain's Chamber of Commerce and Industry Chairman Dr. Essam Fakhro also welcomed the measure and its compliance with international standards as a breakthrough for trade unions.

"It reaffirms the kingdom's commitment to international criteria regarding pluralism," he said.

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Source: Kingdom of Bahrain
Contact: Rose Sager
(516) 410-4005

This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

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Prime Minister of Bahrain Works to Implement National Dialogue Political Reforms

MANAMA, Bahrain, October 24, 2011—His Royal Highness, Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, Prime Minister of Bahrain, met earlier this month with government ministers to ensure continued progress on the implementation of the political National Dialogue reforms.

The meeting between the HRH the Prime Minister and other cabinet ministers set in motion the start of necessary legislative and legal measures needed to implement the National Dialogue reforms. Procedure requires the cabinet ministers to approve a report on the implementation process, which the Prime Minister will then submit to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa.

The political reforms that were discussed include; the shifting of the role of Chairman of the National Committee that presides over Parliament from the Upper House (the Shura Council) to the elected House of Representatives, a review of voting districts to make sure the constituencies are fairly represented, an implementation of stricter guidelines for appointment to the Shura Council, and an increase of the legislative and regulatory powers of the House of Representatives.

These National Dialogue recommendations will serve to increase the powers of parliament and its members by granting greater legislative power and the ability to more closely monitor and scrutinize the government.

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Source: Bahrain News Agency
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This has been distributed by Qorvis Communications on Behalf of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

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BAHRAIN'S PLANS FOR MANAMA AS CULTURAL CAPITAL OF THE ARAB WORLD 2012

Manama, 30th October 2011: Bahrain's Culture Minister, Shaikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa, has announced a broad raft of programmes and events that will be held throughout next year to celebrate the Bahraini capital, Manama, as Cultural Capital of the Arab World 2012.

It is the first time Manama has been selected for this honour since the initiative was launched by the Arab League in 1996, as part of UNESCO's cultural capitals programme.

Speaking at a press conference at the National Museum to spell out plans for Manama as Cultural Capital of the Arab World, Shaikha Mai bint Mohammed Al Khalifa said, "This title emphasises Manama's pioneering role in the field of culture and knowledge in the region."

A broad range of activities incorporating different aspects of Arab culture will take place month by month throughout the year. January will concentrate, for instance, on fine arts, and there are various art exhibitions and a sculpture symposium planned.

February will focus on architecture, and one project will be a competition for proposals to redevelop Bahrain's most popular souk, or market, Bab Al Bahrain. Heritage is the theme for April, when an international conference on the World Heritage Convention will take place.

June will be the month for poetry, and July for literature. A highlight of August will be screening of Arab movies, followed by music as the focus for September, with a special production on the masters of Arabic singing, coinciding with the 21st Bahrain International Music Festival.

Events in October will look at the environment and include a forum on traditional knowledge for the management of nature reserves and heritage sites.

Among the events scheduled for November next year, when theatre is the theme, is the staging of play highlighting the history of Bahrain. The whole programme concludes in December with a look at the theme of 'homeland', and the launch of a series of books based on the 12 pillars of culture in focus throughout the year.

Among the many diverse projects and initiatives lined up for next year are the opening of the new National Theatre, the launch of a Regional Centre for World Heritage, the holding of an international fashion show, and a convention of leading Arab intellectuals.

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Source: Information Affairs Authority, Kingdom of Bahrain
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